REMARKS

Claims 4-8 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 103 (a). The Examiner relies on a combination of Lech (4375254), Sedlock (3913716), Mistry (5902498) and Offer et al (6191379) in his rejection.

Applicants believe that the Examiner has improperly relied on a hind-sight reconstruction of the invention in rejecting the claims. This belief is based in part on the large number of references (four) needed to reject a single claim. Even with four references, the Examiner must still resort to the unsupported statement that "the temperature at which the weld area is treated is base on the application" to reach all of the elements of the claim.

The examiner does not show any suggestion to combine Offer et al with Mistry et al. In fact, Mistry et al seeks to avoid thermal stresses by using a low temperature joining material. Offer, in contrast, makes no attempt to avoid high temperatures, and instead teaches the use of preheating and post heating in the joining of reactor pipes or tubes which are of substantially equal thickness.

Applicants hereby respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of the claims. Any questions may be addressed to applicants' below identified representative.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 05-0275.

Respectfully submitted,

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